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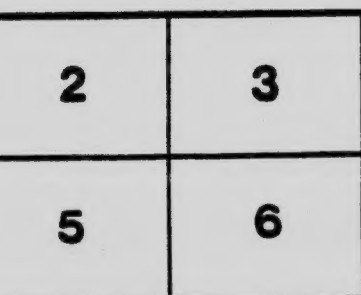
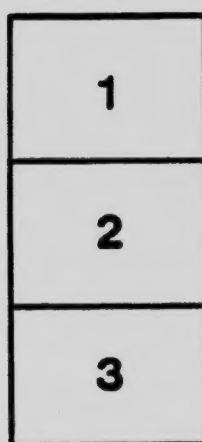
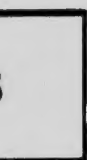
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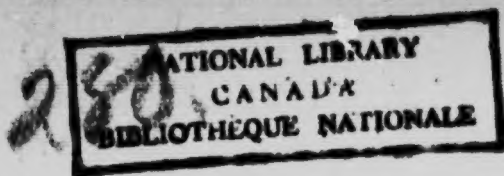
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SUGGESTIONS
FOR THE
OCTAVE OF PRAYER FOR
CHRISTIAN UNITY

JANUARY 18-25, 1919
(January 5-12, Eastern Calendar)

CHRISTIANS of every name in every land have been asked again by the Commission of the American Episcopal Church on the World Conference on Faith and Order to fill these eight days with ardent prayer that their hearts and the hearts of all their brethren may be given wholly to the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer for their visible unity. This leaflet has been prepared by Robert H. Gardiner from material gathered from many sources, and is printed by him on his sole responsibility, in the hope that it may be of some help for public services or for private use.

The Lord's Prayer should of course be used every day.

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Copies of this leaflet may be had free from Robert H. Gardiner, 174 Water Street, Gardiner, Maine, U.S. A. Any one who desires to reprint may do so without asking permission, but Mr. Gardiner would be glad to have copies of such reprints.

Pamphlets explaining the World Conference movement to prepare the way for the reunion of Christendom, and a Manual of Prayer for Unity, longer and more formal than this leaflet, can be had free on application to the same address.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be alway acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Ps. xix, 14, 15.

Saturday, January 18

That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. S. JOHN xvii, 21.

CHRISTIAN Unity is not negative, but positive; not merely abstaining from ecclesiastical controversies and sectarian competition, but the indisputable evidence which will bring the world to Christ, for it is the manifestation of the one Life of God Incarnate in the Person of His Son that He may offer to man that participation in His Life by which man may be redeemed.

We are too apt to think of unity as if it were merely of organization or government. Christ prayed for a unity of will and love, so that we might have life and power to manifest Him to His world through the Church, which is His Body. The motive for unity is the desire to bring the world to Christ, and the only road to success in missions, at home or abroad, the only hope for establishing peace and righteousness and love between nations and classes, individuals and churches, is the manifestation of the one Life, Who alone is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

So when our Lord offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, He prayed

for the unity of His disciples as the potent evidence necessary to convince and convert mankind.

If the world is to be convinced that Christ came to redeem mankind, it must be by something that the world can see. So Christian unity must be visible. Spiritual unity alone is not effective, for it is not recognized by the world which knows not the things of the spirit. Unity must be spiritual, for the spirit is life, and the spirit of unity is the one Life of the world. But if it be truly spiritual, it will manifest itself visibly.

Let us pray:

That we may see that the visible unity of Christians is the means by which Christ is to be lifted up that He may draw all men to Him.

That we may see that a divided Christianity cannot with one mind and one mouth glorify God and proclaim the Gospel of the one Redeemer.

That we may see how our divisions blur the vision of the one Lord and keep Him from His world.

That we may see that our divisions make the world think that Christ is divided.

That we may see that our divisions distract our minds and repel those who hear of Christ only through our discordant voices.

That we may see that we cannot bring about

unity of ourselves, and that all we can or need do is to surrender our wills to the one Will of God.

That each of us, and all of us together, may, by complete surrender to Him Who is the Life, be filled with His Presence and manifest Him to the world.

O LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who saidst unto Thine Apostles, Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; Regard not our sins, but the faith of thy Church, and grant her that peace and unity which is agreeable to thy will, who livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.

O GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord: that as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

VOUCHSAFE, we beseech thee, Almighty God, to grant unto the whole Christian people unity, peace and true concord, both visible and invisible; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 19

As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. S. JOHN xvii, 21.

THE unity for which our Lord prayed is infinitely beyond human achievement. We can hinder it and seem to mar it, but we cannot create it, for it is perfect oneness in the one Life of the Blessed Trinity.

So long as we consider it a matter for human arrangement, our efforts will be blocked by our arrogance and self-sufficiency, our jealousies and suspicions, our desire for the aggrandizement of self or of our own Communion. It is not a matter of the human will, driven hither and thither by conflicting forces. It is God's Will, always one.

Nor is it to be brought about by compromises or concessions reducing the Faith in God and the Church which is the Body of Christ to a statement so colorless that no one will take any interest in it. The Faith is the act of the whole of a man, heart and mind and soul and will, by which he surrenders himself to, and so receives, the Life of God through Christ by Whom all things consist.

All life is unity, for life is the mysterious force which binds together the different mem-

bers and regulates their functions. So in Christian unity the Life of God Incarnate vivifies and binds together and coördinates into the infinity of Himself the diversities of mankind.

Let us pray:

That God the Holy Ghost will open our eyes to see more clearly the perfect Unity of the Blessed Trinity.

That we may be filled with true humility.

That we may come now, in this mortal life, to that eternal life which is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent.

That we may have grace to surrender ourselves wholly to God's will, so that we may have the power of an endless life to manifest Him to His world.

That we may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love.

That we may all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

O GOD, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O CHRIST, the Word of the Most High Father, who wast made flesh to dwell among us, enter into our hearts, that all we who have been redeemed by the mystery of thine Incarnation may remain united in the fellowship of perpetual peace. Amen.

O GOD the Father, Good beyond all that is good, Fair beyond all that is fair, in whom is calmness, peace and concord; do thou make up the dissensions which divide us from each other, and bring us back into an unity of love, which may bear some likeness to thy sublime Nature. And as thou art above all things, make us one by the unanimity of a good mind, that through the embrace of charity and the bonds of affection we may be spiritually one, as well in ourselves as in each other, through that peace of thine which maketh all things peaceful, and through the grace, mercy and tenderness of thine Only-begotten Son. Amen.

Monday, January 20

I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. S. JOHN V, 30.

OUR divisions arose, and are being perpetuated, by the pride and diversity and instability of the human will. Finite man has undertaken to delimit the relation of God to the world and, in the pride of his self-opinion, has dared to act as if to him had been entrusted the whole counsel of the Almighty, and as if God were shut in to this or that particular means for the salvation of the world. Hence we have sought our own will, not God's, and our prayers for unity are too often, in substance, only that God will bring the world to agree with us.

Prayer is not to bend God's will to ours, but to bring our wills into harmony with His, and we can pray only that God will manifest to us the unity He wills and give us grace to follow it.

Let us pray:

That God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That we may have grace to surrender our pride of self-opinion.

That, becoming as little children, we may be fit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

That we may seek not our own will, but the Will of Christ.

That we may see that he that doeth the will of the Father shall learn of the doctrine.

That we may see that we can learn about unity not by our finite thinking about it and planning for it, but by beginning to practise the love which is unity.

GRANT to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as are right; that we, who cannot do anything that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who art able to do such things as pass man's understanding, give us an heart earnestly to believe that thou art able and willing to do all those things for the good of thy Church which, of ourselves, we are unable to perform. Cast out from our hearts, we beseech thee, the spirit of unbelief: and help us so to humble ourselves before thee and to open our hearts and minds to the teaching of thy Spirit and the leading of thy will that those things may be accomplished which shall unite in one Body thy faithful people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Tuesday, January 21

That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. S. JOHN xiii, 34, 35.

He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. I JOHN iv, 16.

CONTROVERSIES among Christians have appeared to rend asunder the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and have deafened the world to the message of His redemptive love. The World Conference on Faith and Order is an attempt to proclaim again the new commandment of Love as the key-note of God's revelation of Himself in Jesus, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the Conference itself, and if the Conference is to be of value, also in all the preparations for it, we are to try to understand and appreciate one another and to see the value of the precious things for which our brethren stand. If we will, we may find treasures of whose value we have never dreamed. So long as we rely on controversy, we make, too often, the truths for which we stand stumbling-blocks and rocks of offence to our brethren.

As the Life of God manifested in the

Blessed Trinity is Love, so the only road for man to attain the Life which is unity is Love. Love is the surrender of self, that self may be found again, transformed, enriched, fulfilled. We do not love one another, and so we do not understand one another and are driven to stand apart. Our chief desire is to overpower our brother in controversy so that he may be driven to abandon his opinions and accept ours. If we loved him, we would understand him and perhaps might gain from, and give to, him new glimpses into infinite truth, for love is unity and life and power.

Let us pray:

That our hearts may be cleansed of controversy and filled with Christian humility and love.

That we may see that only so far as we share in the love of Christ can we find our true selves and be fit instruments for God's manifestation of Himself to the world.

That we and our brethren, especially those from whom we seem to differ most, may be drawn nearer to each other in love.

O GOD the Holy Ghost, Spirit of wisdom and love and power, illuminate and strengthen those who have been appointed to bring about a World Conference on the Faith

and Order of thy Church. Give them patience and courage, humility, love and steadfastness, and utter obedience to thy guidance. Fill the hearts of all Christian people with the desire to manifest to the world by their unity its Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, so that his kingdom of peace and righteousness and love may be established and all men may be drawn to him, who, with thee and the Father, liveth and reigneth one God for ever. Amen.

Wednesday, January 22

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. EPH. iv, 15, 16.

WE need one another for our completion. The Christian Faith is not the separate relations of millions of isolated individuals with God, nor merely the intellectual acceptance of certain facts and doctrines, but membership in the Church which is the Body of Christ, filled with His Life and so binding the members into One. Each of us has some vision of Him Who is the Truth, but the vision of each is partial, for each is finite. We need to unite in the one Life, to follow the one Way, if we are to comprehend, as fully as finite beings can, the one Truth. And because Christ is the manifestation of God's Love for man, we shall, if we are truly one in Christ, be filled with that Love and so help one another a little nearer to the vision of the King in His beauty.

Let us pray:

That the precious things entrusted to the stewardship of the several Communion may be the possession of the united Church.

For other Christians, that faith and piety and zeal may abound in them; that the prejudices and barriers that divide them may be removed; that they may perceive the points in which they agree rather than those in which they differ; that each may face with courage, but discuss in love, differences which seem vital.

O GOD, who on the mount didst reveal to chosen witnesses thine only-begotten Son wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistering; Mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may be permitted to behold the King in his beauty, who with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen.

ALMIGHTY and Everlasting God, by whose spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy Holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thursday, January 23

Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? S. LUKE vi, 41.

SO long as we look only for errors in our brother, we shall magnify and distort them and harden him in his adherence to them. I may be quite wrong, and you entirely right; yet, as happened often in the black ages when Christians alternated in persecuting each other, you may so assail my error that I will cling to it more closely than to my life, and you may so present your truth that I will gladly be burned at the stake rather than accept it. So you will not only harden me in my error, but you will fall into error yourself, for Christian truth is the manifestation of Christ Who is Love. If I loved my brother whom I think is in error, I might learn of him, for to love is to understand, as to understand is to love.

Let us pray:

That God the Holy Spirit will give us patience to understand those who are separated from us and power to appreciate the truths for which they stand.

That He will show us how to give up what-

ever is sectarian in our contentions, and how to make plain to our brethren the truth which He has revealed to us.

That God will forgive us for failure to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit among and through our brethren.

That we may have grace to seek to be reconciled to our brethren so that we may be fit to offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto God.

That we may see that, however our brethren who worship Christ may seem to differ with us, we and they have access by the one Spirit unto the one Father.

That we may have grace to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

O LORD and Saviour Christ, who camest not to strive nor to cry, but to let thy words fall as the drops that water the earth; Grant to all who contend for the Faith, never to injure it by clamor or impatience; but, speaking thy precious truth in love, so to present it that it may be loved, and that men may see in it thy goodness and thy beauty; who livest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Friday, January 24

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. S. JOHN vi, 56.

THE crowning horror and blasphemy of our divisions is that we shut one another out from the one great Sacrament of Love, which Christ instituted as the symbol and means and visible bond of unity, because it is the remembrance of His Sacrifice of Himself for mankind. If the Lord's Supper be only a memorial, yet it is the memorial of supremest love. How dare we join in it, if our hearts be not so filled with love for our brethren that we and they will be constrained to oneness? If it be the approach to the Real Presence of Christ, if it be the reception of His actual Flesh and Blood, if it be the representation of and the participation in the one full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, whereby we may receive the very Life of God in Christ, how dare we believe that Christ will deign to dwell in us and we in Him until we are reconciled in Him to the brethren for whom He gave Himself?

God made man free to be His friend or to reject Him. And because we are free, Christ is waiting to complete His redemption of the

world till we are willing, by our unity in Him, to manifest Him on the Cross. Shall we continue to let our divisions hinder His perfect work?

So far as by our divisions we hide the Cross, we crucify the Lord afresh, for we keep men from coming to Him to be saved.

Let us pray:

That we may see how far we are individually responsible for the continuance of the divisions which keep from the wor'd the vision of the Cross.

That God the Holy Ghost will help us to search our hearts, if perchance our arrogance and pride of self-opinion have helped to perpetuate and deepen those divisions.

That He may bring us to repent for our aloofness from one another and for all our faults of pride and self-sufficiency.

That if our brethren of other Communion feel bound not to admit us yet to the Sacrament of Unity, we may accept their refusal in humility and love and try to understand that they are compelled by what they believe to be God's Will.

That if we feel that our Communion is bound to refuse that Sacrament to others, we may do it in sorrowing love and with earnest prayer that they and we may come to a fuller knowledge of Him Who is the Truth.

That we may be filled with such true repentance for our guilt that we may be cleansed to reconcile the world to Christ.

BLESSED Saviour, who on this day didst hang upon the cross, stretching forth thy loving arms; Grant that all mankind may look unto thee and be saved; through thy mercies and merits, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost art one God, world without end. Amen.

MAY the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Saturday, January 25

The truth shall make you free. S. JOHN viii, 32.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ. EPH. i, 10.

That those things which cannot be shaken may remain. HEB. xii, 27.

It shall be told thee what thou must do. ACTS ix, 6.

THE world can no longer endure the horrors that have come upon it; those horrors will increase until we who profess ourselves Christians are willing to be one in Christ that He may be lifted up to do His perfect work. The world has been shaken to its foundations: shall the old order be restored, or shall the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ? Shall we, by our divisions, continue to stifle the voice of the King of Love, seeking to speak through His Church? Or shall we yield ourselves utterly to Him that His Will of peace and righteousness and love may be established?

Have we ever said, like the great Apostle whom we commemorate to-day, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" If we will humbly ask that, it shall be told us what we must do to

manifest the Will of God, and the new order for which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now will be established, mercy and truth will meet together, righteousness and peace will kiss each other, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Let us pray:

That God the Father will send to us, in Christ's name, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to teach us all things and bring to our remembrance Christ's new commandment of love.

That, by our visible unity in Christ the Life, the world may see its Redeemer, and the Kingdom of peace and righteousness and love may be established.

MAY the Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: And may the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us, and remain with us always. Amen.

